



# **YOUNG REBELS: THE STORY OF THE SOUTHALL YOUTH MOVEMENT**

**(Part of the Digital:Works Archive)**

**(DW/6)**

**DW/6**

## **Young Rebels**

**2014**

**Name of Creator:** Digital:Works, community history group; Various.

**Extent:** 18 mp3, 1 DVD, 18 jpgs, 1 booklet, 1 pdf

**Administrative/Biographical History:** The Southall Youth Movement (SYM) was an anti-racist and anti-fascist group made up of Asian and Black Britons living in Southall, West London. SYM was established in 1976 after an unarmed Sikh teenager named Gurdip Singh Chaggar was murdered by Neo-Nazi skinheads. SYM organised peaceful protests demanding justice for Chaggar and his family. In April 1979 SYM organised a demonstration against the National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall. In turn the police protected the National Front and unleashed brute force with the Special Patrol Group against SYM members and other members of the public resulting in the death of schoolteacher Blair Peach. SYM along with Lord Paul Boateng defended the some 300 peaceful protesters who were arrested and tried miles away from Southall in Barnet. SYM set up a youth centre in an abandoned building because the Ealing Council provided no such service to Southall children at that time. There SYM members mentored kids and taught them different skills such as photography and music recording. The band Misty in Roots was formed at the SYM Centre.

**Custodial History:** Deposited with Bishopsgate Institute by Digital:Works, December 2018.

**Scope and Content:** Material created during the project 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement', which was developed by The Asian Health Agency in partnership with digital:works.

Includes:

- Eighteen original oral history interviews recorded for the project
- Copy of the booklet and DVD of the documentary created during the project and featuring extracts of the oral histories
- Digital photographs of the individuals who participated in the project
- PDF containing information about the oral history interviews and interviewees

**System of Arrangement:**

No further arrangement required.

**Language/scripts of material:**

English

**Access conditions:**

OPEN

**Copying conditions:**

Photocopying, scanning and digital photography (without flash) is permitted for research purposes on completion of the Library's Copyright Declaration form and with respect to current UK copyright law.

**Finding Aids:**

Copy of handlist available in researcher's area.

**Rules and Conventions:**

Compiled in compliance with General International Standard Archival Description, ISAD(G), second edition, 2000; National Council on Archives Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names, 1997.

DW/6/1

**Balraj Purewal**

**[2014]**

Name: Balraj Purewal

Brief descriptive note: BP, a founding member and general secretary of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 115min

Summary: BP describes moving to Southall in 1961 at age 8, describes the racism he experienced as a child in the neighbourhood and at school (from students and teachers), he and his siblings being bussed to different schools, playing extramural football for the local Indian Youth Club and the racism he experienced on the field, family life, career aspirations of being a pilot and working for British Airways, the creation of the Southall Youth Movement (SYM) and the actions they took in response to the murder of Gurdeep Chaggar, the structure of SYM including their aims and objectives, SYM's protest against the BNP planning to meet in Southall, describes the protest street by street and nearly hour by hour, police brutality and racism from the emergency services, brutality from the Special Patrol Group, Blair Peach's murder, supporting fellow SYM members following their arrests and sentencing through the Southall Defence Campaign, 1981 skinhead attacks in Ealing Broadway and the resulting burning of Hambrough Tavern in Southall, opinion on current state of youths in Southall

NB: these are digital items which can be accessed in the Researchers Area.

**OPEN**

DW/6/2

**Hari Sandhu**

**[2014]**

Name: Hari Sandhu

Brief descriptive note: HS, a founding member of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 35min

Summary: HS describes his early years and moving to Southall from Punjabi with his parents, racism he experienced at school, 'teddy boys', skinhead gangs terrorising the Asian community in Southall, the murder of Gurdeep Chaggar and the inception of the Southall Youth Movement (SYM), the events of 23 April 1979 of National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall and the protests against it, the murder of Blair Peach, police brutality then and now, experience of the Hambrough Tavern, SYM's achievements in Southall, racism in Southall today compared to the 1970s

NB: these are digital items which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

**OPEN**

**DW/6/3**

**Sukhdev Aujla**

**[2014]**

Name: Sukhdev Aujla

Brief descriptive note: SA, a founding member of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 43min

Summary: SA gives his interview in what is assumed to be Punjabi. Parts of his history are translated in the documentary

NB: these are which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

**OPEN**

**DW/6/4**

**Sunil Sinha**

**[2014]**

Name: Sunil Sinha

Brief descriptive note: SS, a Southall Youth Movement committee member, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 41min

Summary: SS describes coming to Southall in 1977 and working for National Association for Asian Youth, meeting and being befriended by Balraj Purewal and working at Southall Youth

Movement (SYM), mentoring and tutoring younger members of SYM, Indian Workers Association, the effects of Gurdeep Chaggar's murder, events leading up to 23 April 1979 National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall, being on the receiving end of police brutality, working to defend the estimated 300 SYM members who had been arrested, Gareth Pierce and Paul Boateng as defending solicitors, the effects of the 1979 riots, the murder of Blair Peach, Hambrough Tavern being burned down, police corruption, effect of SYM

NB: these are digital items which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

**OPEN**

**DW/6/5**

**Avtar Dosanjh**

**[2014]**

Name: Avtar Dosanjh

Brief descriptive note: AD, a Southall Youth Movement committee member, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 49min

Summary: AD describes moving to Southall with his parents, early experiences as an immigrant, experiences of racism in school and in his neighbourhood, Gurdeep Chaggar's murder, inception of Southall Youth Movement (SYM), SYM members aiding fellow recipients of racism in Brick Lane, events of 23 April 1979 protesting the National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall, police brutality, organisational structure of SYM, events leading up to Hambrough Tavern being burned down

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**OPEN**

**DW/6/6**

**Balwinder Pal**

**[2014]**

Name: Balwinder Pal

Brief descriptive note: BP, a Southall Youth Movement committee member, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project

undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works  
 Recording length: 48min  
 Summary: BP describes moving to the UK with his family at 3 years old from Punjab, early memories of Southall, racism in school and in the neighbourhood, Gurdeep Chaggar's murder, beginning of his involvement in Southall Youth Movement (SYM), protest against National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall on 23 April 1979, murder of Blair Peach, grievous injury sustained by Clarence Baker - member of Afro-Caribbean youth group The Peoples Unite, SYM counselling sessions held at the SYM centre, Southall Black Sisters, police brutality, SYM Legal Defence Campaign, events leading up to and including the burning down of the Hambrough Tavern in 1981, how SYM changed Southall and how Southall has changed since the early 1980s

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**DW/6/7**

**Jagdish Banger**

**[2014]**

Name: Jagdish Banger  
 Brief descriptive note: JB, an activist and supporter of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works  
 Recording length: 66min  
 Summary: JB describes early family life in Southall, racism in school and in the neighbourhood, the experience of being 'bussed' to school, murder of Gurdeep Chaggar, community life in Southall, events leading up to and including the protest against the National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall 23 April 1979, murder of Blair Peach, inception of Southall Youth Movement (SYM) and the SYM Centre, Misty in Roots, the mentoring he received from SYM, events leading up to the Hambrough Tavern being burned down in 1981, police brutality and corruption, Stephen Lawrence, stop and search, Southall of his youth compared to today

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**OPEN**

**DW/6/8**

**Shan Chaudhary**

**[2014]**

Name: Shan Chaudhary

Brief descriptive note: SC, an activist and supporter of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 44min

Summary: SC describes his family's decision to move to Southall from Pakistan, his first memories of Southall, being 'bussed' in to school, racism his parents experienced, murder of Gurdip Chaggar, inception of Southall Youth Movement (SYM), how SYM liaised with the community, events leading up to and including the protest against National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall on 23 April 1979, Blair Peach's murder, police corruption and brutality - then and now, his arrest, SYM Defence Campaign, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern burning down in 1981, SYM's lasting effect on Southall and the national Asian community

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**DW/6/9**

**Jaswant Hunjan**

**[2014]**

Name: Jaswant Hunjan

Brief descriptive note: JH, an activist and supporter of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 47min

Summary: JH describes moving to Hounslow and then Southall from Kenya, his first memories of Southall, being 'bussed' to school, racism in school, National Front abusing Asian community in Southall and nationally, murder of Gurdip



Chaggar, the Holy Smokes, aims of SYM, events leading up to and including the protest against the National Front meeting its Southall Town Hall April 1979, police brutality, arrest experience, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern burning down in 1981, lasting impact of SYM, murder of Blair Peach, racism in Southall and nationally - then and now

NB: these are digital files which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

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**DW/6/10**

**Malkit Hear**

**[2014]**

Name: Malkit Hear

Brief descriptive note: MH, an activist and supporter of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 25min

Summary: MH describes his early memories of Southall, learning English, being 'bussed' out of Southall for school, racism in school and in Southall, the murder of Gurdip Chaggar, being arrested while protesting the National Front meeting in Southall in 1979, police brutality, he murder of Blair Peach, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern being burned down in 1981, lasting effects of SYM in Southall and nationally - especially in Birmingham, racism in the police - then and now

NB: these are digital files which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

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**DW/6/11**

**Tejinder Sangha**

**[2014]**

Name: Tejinder Sangha

Brief descriptive note: TS, an activist and supporter of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 26min

Summary: TS describes his parents moving

from India to Aldgate to Southall, early memories of Southall, racism experienced after school, murder of Gurdip Chaggar, inception of Southall Youth Movement (SYM), aims of SYM, events leading up to and including the protest against National Front meeting at Southall Hall Town in 1979, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern burning down in 1981, SYM's counselling and mentoring services, Asian football team and the racism the team experienced

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**DW/6/12**

**Kamaljit Sahib**

**[2014]**

Name: Kamaljit Sahib

Brief descriptive note: KS, a member of Southall Rights, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 57min

Summary: KS describes his parents moving from Punjab to East Africa and being born here, moving to England with his mother and siblings after his father died, school and community life in Africa compared to Southall, being beaten up by skinheads outside Southall Police Station, racism at work, the murder of Gurdip Chaggar, involvement in the Southall Youth Movement (SYM) and a separate legal defence group, the protest against National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall in 1979, police brutality, his arrest in the protest, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern burning down in 1981, the murder of Blair Peach, working with SYM in the late 1980s and early 1990s, lasting influence of SYM in Southall and nationally

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**DW/6/13**

**Suresh Grover**

**[2014]**

Name: Suresh Grover

Brief descriptive note: SG, a member of Southall Monitoring Group, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 97min

Summary: SG describes first coming to Southall at age 20 and coming to the UK from East Africa aged 9 or 10 (his parents originally from Punjab), growing up in Nelson (Lincolnshire), racism in the community and at school, events leading up to and including his being stabbed by a skinhead, feeling a pressure to assimilate to English culture, initial experiences of Southall, murder of Gurdip Chaggar and the proceeding demonstration, the national effect that the Southall demonstration had against Chaggar's murder, inception of Southall Youth Movement (SYM), becoming a member of Southall Rights, deciding to leave the UK in 1978 and returning 2 April 1979, events leading up to and including the National Front meeting in Southall 23 April 1979, police brutality, his arrest and his sentencing (with SYM members) in Barnet (20 miles from Southall) in special courts with no jury, the campaign 'Support the Southall 342', murder of Blair Peach and the corruption surrounding the inquest into his death, Stephen Lawrence and the legal case of his death against the police, Misty in Roots and Eve Turner, the People's Unite building, government corruption on the local and national level, events leading up to, after and including the Hambrough Tavern being burned down 3 July 1981, national race riots in July 1981, women's rights, Southall Black Sisters, Lawrence campaign, lasting influence of SYM and other protest groups in Southall and nationally

NB: these are digital files which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

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**DW/6/14**

**Oliver New**

**[2014]**

Name: Oliver New

Brief descriptive note: ON, a local trade unionist, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral

history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works  
 Recording length: 56min  
 Summary: ON describes attending Brunel University, how Southall compared to his native Cardiff, his early impressions of Southall, his white privilege at work in a factory, progressive social movements in the late 60s early 70s, working for National Association for Asian Youth (NAY) which was located in Southall, NAY's bookshop (Shakti), printshop and community projects, murder of Gurdip Chaggar and the related demonstration in 1976, John Kingsley Read the then-leader of the National Front being found not guilty of inciting racial hatred with racist remarks in a speech relating to Chaggar's murder, the events leading up to and including the demonstration against the National Front meeting at Southall Town Hall in April 1979, police brutality, murder of Blair Peach, the grievous injuries sustained by Clarence Baker, being monitored by the police, police attitudes towards protestors then and now, police attitudes towards fascist groups then and now, Stephen Lawrence, lasting influence of SYM in Southall and nationally, events leading up to and including the Hambrough Tavern being burned down in 1981, community of Southall then and now

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**DW/6/15**

**Eve Turner**

**[2014]**

Name: Eve Turner  
 Brief descriptive note: ET, a Southall community activist, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works  
 Recording length: 44min  
 Summary: ET describes moving to Southall, her professional background, racism, workers' rights, sweatshops, Gurdip Chaggar's murder, Southall Youth Movement, April 1979 elections (specifically leading up to and including the protest on the 23rd), National Association of

Asian Youth, People's Unite Centre, being bashed in the head by the police with a baton, events of July 1981, Southall Black Sisters, Blair Peach, participation in Ealing Trade Union Council and her current commitment to anti-fascist and anti-racist activities, parallels between Thatcherism and the current Tory government

NB: these are digital files which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

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**DW/6/16**

**Poko**

**[2014]**

Name: Poko

Brief descriptive note: Poko, a vocalist for the music group Misty in Roots, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 35min

Summary: Poko describes moving to Southall at a very young age from the Caribbean, school experiences, the black community and the black experience in Southall in the early to mid-1970s, the murder of Gurdip Chaggar, events leading up to and including the demonstration against the National Front in 1979, People's Unite - it's centre and it's aims, Southall Youth Movement (SYM) centre, creation of Misty in Roots and the kind of songs they write, police brutality, Rock Against Racism, murder of Blair Peach, the council shutting down People's Unite centre, the burning down of Hambrough Tavern

NB: these are digital files which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

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**DW/6/17**

**Lord Paul Boateng**

**[2014]**

Name: Lord Paul Boateng

Brief descriptive note: PB, defending solicitor for members of Southall Youth Movement, was interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 70mim

Summary: PB describes being born in Hackney but being raised in the Gold Coast in Ghana, his parents being part of the political movements in Ghana and their needing to flee later due to the military coup in 1966, his education and early law career, becoming involved in political and protest movements as a teenager, racism, police brutality, 'making black a term of pride', Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech and the effect that had, police brutality, racism in the police, stop and search, the murder of Gurdip Chaggar, police corruption, the shooting of Cherry Gross, first impressions of the National Front wanting to meet at Southall Town Hall in April 1979, first impressions of Southall Youth Movement (SYM) and Southall Black Sisters, murder of Blair Peach, inception of the Anti-Nazi League, his role as defending solicitor for those arrested in the demonstration April 1979, lasting influence of SYM in Southall and nationally in various issues

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**OPEN**

**DW/6/18**

**Group Interview**

**[2014]**

Title: Group interview

Brief descriptive note: Group interviewed as part of the 'Young Rebels: The Story of the Southall Youth Movement' oral history project undertaken in partnership by the Asian Health Agency and digital : works

Recording length: 54min

Summary: Unspecified group of Southall Youth Movement (SYM) members describing their clashes with the police, arrests, trials, police brutality and corruption relating to the events of April 1979

NB: this is a digital file which can be accessed in the Researchers Area

**OPEN**

**DW/6/19**

**Young Rebels : The Story of the Southall Youth Movement**

**2014**

Title: Young Rebels : The Story of the Southall

Youth Movement

Creating body: Asian Health Agency and digital :  
works

Recording length: 64mins

Format: 1 avi

Summary: Documentary featuring video interviews with the members of Southall Youth Movement and other activists in Southall as well as footage from 1970s Southall relating to the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar in 1976, the protest against the National Front in 1979 and the burning down of the Hambrough Tavern in 1981.

NB: these are digital items which can be  
accessed in the Researchers Area

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